

38 Wellesley Circle
Glen Echo, Md, 20812
Dec. 2, 1986

Dear Harold,

Thanks again for your hospitality. I am awestruck at your persistence, discipline and organization. I have the first two traits in some quantity but lack the latter and always admire it when I find it. I have received today your letter and the enclosures of Nov. 28 and thank you for them.

These are my thoughts (I was so excited by the Oswald security clearance stuff that I couldn't sleep Friday night, an unusual occurrence for somebody whose daily routine resembles a timetable for the German National Railroad):

-The framework for my research is the general theme of how the press has become an arm of government, particularly in Washington, particularly in recent times. One of the tools of manipulation is concealment and denial of information and I have found no better example than this, although I have others, of course, including the dismal Bay of Pigs episode and an earlier, unknown suppression of facts by The Times in the Guatemala invasion of 1954. I believe there is a strong chapter on how the American press was blinded in the Kennedy assassination, for the benefit of the FBI and Lyndon Johnson, but my present research would be limited to that. For this book's chapter, I want to deal with manageable episodes to illustrate my thesis. I don't want to compete with you on reopening the whole investigation.

-On the Oswald security business, I think I have the evidence from you to show that he had a Secret clearance, at the minimum, but I would like, in the absence of something stronger, a paragraph from you recalling your KGO encounter with the man who had been in Oswald's company and the kind of work he said they did which would have required a higher clearance. The reason I was so excited about the information is that I have always been a U-2 buff (I covered the Powers trial in Moscow as a tad reporter) and the concealment of his security clearance could mean that the CIA, in order to cover up its involvement in Strong Back, jeopardized a far more important operation, the overflights of the Soviet Union. You recall that a U.S. reconnaissance pilot, Allen Pope, was shot down over Indonesia and had to be, in effect, ransomed by the Eisenhower administration, which was not something that Allen Dulles liked to be reminded of. In short, the evidence indicates that Oswald's certain knowledge of a vital fact, the confirmed operating altitude of the U-2, was concealed from other parts of the U.S. intelligence community. Two years later, the Soviets apparently operating with that knowledge, were able to shoot down their first U-2. The FBI's continued refusal to recognize their lack of investigative zeal may have led to the whole U-2 mess. I would like to publish this separately,

FBI leaks

maybe as a piece in Outlook, maybe somewhere else. But it is meant to be a chapter for my book on the press, at this point, and not something larger.

The Schrand shooting is less clear to me as material. It is certain from the transcript that the mystery was never seriously dealt with by the FBI or the Warren Commission. But, even if Oswald were in the area, it seems to me that the time interval between the shot, and the Officer of the Guard's arriving at the site of the shooting was so short that nothing could have happened that would have compromised the crypto van (I agree that it certainly shows that Schrand and other members of the group, including Oswald, certainly would have had to have had high security clearances to have been sentries at the crypto van and it shows it was wrong that the conventional knowledge was he was guarding a U-2)). It sounds to me as if Schrand, one of the high-type enlisted men in an intelligence group, got bored out of his gourd with doing sentry duty (as I was about the same time in another country, forced to do occasional sentry duty, editing an Army newspaper) and began doing parade drills with a loaded Remington shotgun, which was a fatally stupid thing to do. Except as an example of how little research was done by the FBI, it doesn't seem to be relevant to my theme. In other words, it would be a paragraph or two, no matter how tantalizing it would be in a larger book focussed on the Kennedy assassination and its coverup.

I haven't called Lesar yet, mainly because I have been involved with other, more current stupidities, which I am sure I do not have to describe. I don't believe in the tooth fairy anymore and I certainly don't believe that Don Regan was not told (whether he understood is another question, which is: how can a government operate if the man who is designated to inform the uninformed head of government is himself uninformed and uninformable? And where does that leave the rest of us?)

I am hoping to begin doing an outline on the basis of the material I have from you and other sources this week and will be in touch.

I enjoyed the encounter with you and Lil and I would like to suggest that we-all, including my wife, Carlotta get together soon. It could be here in Glen Echo, 40 minutes down 70S, or at your home grounds if it would be easier, with us bringing the victuals. Let us know your druthers. I think I mentioned that Carlotta is doing a book on her grandfather, an important figure in Middle West labor and anarchist politics, Jo Labadie.

Thank you again for the time and the new material and I (we) will be back in touch soon after you receive this.

Sincerely,

